

Berlin Wall came down, when Iraq's aggression was defeated, ancient enemies talking peace in the Middle East, when democracy really got on the move in this, our own hemisphere. We are helping solidify a legacy of peace. But I cannot rest and you cannot rest until we help this country win another legacy: productive jobs for our citizens, with strong families secure in a more peaceful world. Working together, we changed the world. And now we can change America.

Thank you all very, very much. And may God bless you in your important work.

Note: The President spoke at 11:04 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Boyd L. George, chairman of the board of governors, and John R. Block, president, National American Wholesale Grocers Association; William C. Eacho III, chairman of the board of directors, International Foodservice Distributors Association; Richard Niemann, vice chairman of the board of directors, Food Marketing Institute; and T.C. Godwin, Jr., chairman of the board, National Association of Convenience Stores.

Message to the Congress on Environmental Goals

March 24, 1992

To the Congress of the United States:

In 1991 two events set the stage for a new era in history: the West won the Cold War and the United States led a U.N. coalition to roll back aggression in the Middle East. Both watershed events demonstrated the power of sustained international cooperation in pursuit of just and moral causes. They underscored the need for U.S. leadership in a complex, interdependent world.

Historic changes are also occurring in the relationship between humanity and the environment. We increasingly recognize that environmental improvement promotes peace and prosperity, while environmental degradation can cause political conflict and economic stagnation. We see that environmental protection requires international commitment and strategic American leadership in yet another just and moral cause.

Merging Economic and Environmental Goals

As I often have stated, we can have both economic growth and a cleaner, safer environment. Indeed, the two can be mutually supportive. Sound policies provide both.

My environmental strategy seeks to merge economic and environmental goals. For example, boosting two engines of economic growth—technological change and international trade—can also provide benefits for

the environment. Likewise, regulatory approaches that emphasize economic efficiency can help lower the costs of securing greater environmental quality. The following examples are illustrative:

Investments in Technology: My Administration has invested aggressively in key areas of research and development that will boost productivity and economic performance. Several technologies heralded primarily for their benefit to economic growth and competitiveness, such as advanced materials, high performance computing, electric batteries, and biotechnology, also have valuable environmental applications. Increasing investments in basic environmental research will enable policymakers to devise more informed, effective, and efficient policies.

International Trade: In negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the United States calls on other nations to reduce farm subsidies, which harm competitive farm exports and contribute to environmental degradation. In parallel with negotiations toward a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the United States and Mexico are expanding environmental cooperation. A free trade agreement would lead to stronger growth in both countries and provide increased financial resources for environmental protection.

Economically Efficient Regulations: Our Clean Air Act initiatives spur utility energy efficiency through innovative tradable sulfur emission allowances and an overall cap on emissions. Restraining electricity demand cuts emissions of carbon dioxide and acid rain precursors, lowers energy bills for homeowners and businesses, and limits the need for new powerplant construction.

The Global Environment and Development

Robust economic growth is needed to meet the needs and aspirations of the world's peoples. At the same time, the nations of the world must ensure that economic development does not place untenable burdens on the Earth's environment.

My Administration has been working with business leaders, environmentalists, scientists, and the governments of other countries to develop more effective, efficient, and comprehensive approaches to global economic and environmental issues. Preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED or Earth Summit), which convenes this June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, have accelerated this process.

My priorities for this historic conference are as follows:

- Sign a satisfactory global framework convention on climate change;
- Agree on initial steps leading to a global framework convention on the conservation and management of all the world's forests;
- Improve U.N. environmental and developmental agencies as well as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which provides financial assistance to developing nations in meeting the costs of gaining global environmental benefits;
- Launch an action program to conserve biodiversity and, if possible, sign a satisfactory global framework convention on biodiversity;
- Agree on a strategy and expand efforts to improve the condition of oceans and seas; and
- Adopt a strategy and initiatives to promote technology cooperation in a free market context.

Climate Change: On behalf of the United

States, I hope to sign by June 1992 a global framework convention that will commit as many nations as possible to the timely development of comprehensive national climate action plans. Such plans would commit nations to a process of continuous improvement, addressing sources and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases as well as adaptation measures. Parties to the convention would compare their action programs on a regular basis and revise them as necessary.

By producing specific, comprehensive environmental commitments that fit each nation's particular circumstances, this approach is preferable on environmental and economic grounds to the carbon-dioxide-only proposals that others have espoused. The United States will continue to restrain or reduce its net carbon dioxide emissions by improving energy efficiency, developing cleaner energy sources, and planting billions of trees in this decade. But an exclusive focus on targets and timetables for carbon dioxide emissions is inadequate to address the complex dynamics of climate change.

Forests and Biodiversity: The nations of the world need to do a better job of studying and conserving the diversity of life on Earth. Nations also need to work together to improve the management and protection of all the world's forests. For these reasons, I am renewing my call for a global framework convention on the management and conservation of forests and restating the U.S. hope that UNCED will be the occasion for making progress toward such a convention. I am also hopeful that a convention on the conservation of biodiversity may be signed at UNCED.

Institutional Reform and Funding: Member nations need to coordinate U.N. structures and make them more efficient and effective in meeting UNCED goals. A related priority is to continue development of the World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF). The GEF should become the principal vehicle for assisting developing nations with the incremental costs of gaining global environmental benefits under new international agreements.

Oceans: Coastal and estuarine areas in-

clude some of the most diverse and productive ecosystems on Earth. Increasing population and development are stressing these areas, particularly in nations that lack effective programs to protect and manage marine resources. The United States urges UNCED parties to adopt a set of principles and an action plan to address such issues as the status of living marine resources, coastal zone management, ocean monitoring, and land-based sources of marine pollution.

Technology: The UNCED participants should adopt a strategy and initiatives to promote market-based environmental technology cooperation with developing nations. In some cases, the transfer of environmentally preferable technologies results from official foreign assistance. However, in the vast majority of cases it occurs as the result of private sector activities such as direct foreign investment, joint ventures, licensing, exports, and professional training. Thus the role of governments and international institutions should be to foster the market conditions that accelerate private sector activity in the growing global market for environmental goods and services.

The Domestic Environment

In the midst of increased attention to global environmental issues, the United States in the last 3 years has enacted and begun to implement sweeping environmental reforms. We will continue to take action predicated on sound science and efficient solutions. State and local governments, businesses, community groups, and individual citizens must also play a part.

A number of items on the environmental agenda, including reauthorization of the Clean Water Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and the Endangered Species Act, require a thorough, judicious review with an eye toward the long term. Wherever possible, such legislation should encourage economically sensible, market-based mechanisms. Quick-fix actions will not be in the best interest of the environment or of our economy.

The Congress should make a significant contribution to economic growth and the environment by taking the following steps during this session:

- Enact balanced national energy legislation, providing equal measures of new conservation and production;
- As requested in my budget, provide increased funds to a number of key environmental and natural resources programs; and
- Establish a U.S. Department of the Environment.

National Energy Legislation: In the year that has passed since I proposed a National Energy Strategy (NES) providing equal measures of new energy conservation and production, the Administration has moved to implement more than 90 NES initiatives that do not require legislative action. The Congress has followed through by increasing funding for an array of research and development initiatives. Now, in addition to these measures, the Congress needs to complete action on comprehensive national energy legislation.

Environmental and Natural Resources Budget: Within the context of initiatives to tighten Federal budget discipline, my proposed budget for fiscal 1993 reflects my continuing belief that we should increase national investments in key environmental and natural resources programs. Among my priorities are the following:

- \$1.85 billion (a 17-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for the America the Beautiful program, including acquisition of key park, forest, refuge, and other public lands; my program to encourage public participation in the planting of one billion trees per year; a partnership with the States to create state parks and recreation facilities; and projects to improve environmental infrastructure and recreational opportunities on the public lands;
- A record \$5.5 billion (a 26-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for the cleanup of Department of Energy facilities involved in nuclear weapons manufacture;
- \$201 million (almost double the fiscal 1992 level) for U.S.-Mexico border region cleanup, consistent with the Environmental Action Plan I presented to the Congress last year in support of the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement;

- Almost \$1 billion for energy research and development, including over \$350 million for conservation research and development (more than double the fiscal 1989 level) and \$162.4 million (a 47-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for transportation programs such as development of electric automotive batteries and the purchase of 5,000 alternative-fuel vehicles;
- \$812 million (a 35-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for wetlands research, acquisition, restoration, and enhancement, achieving a 175-percent increase over fiscal 1989 levels;
- For the second year in a row, \$340 million for accelerated construction of sewage treatment facilities in six coastal cities that currently have inadequate treatment facilities;
- \$7 million (a 46-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for the designation and management of National Marine Sanctuaries;
- \$229 million (a 22-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for implementation of the 1990 Clean Air Act;
- \$1.75 billion (an 8-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for cleanup of Superfund toxic waste sites; and
- \$1.37 billion (a 24-percent increase over fiscal 1992) for further expansion of the world's largest global climate change research program.

U.S. Department of the Environment: Considering the scope and importance of responsibilities conferred upon the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), I announced my support in 1990 for legislative efforts to elevate EPA to Cabinet status. The Congressional leadership has responded with controversial, extraneous amendments and parliamentary delays. This legislation should not be held hostage any longer. Once again, I call on the Congress to elevate EPA to Cabinet status and make it the U.S. Department of the Environment.

A National Commitment

There is a growing commitment from all segments of society to improve the environment. A key element of my environmental strategy is encouraging private companies

and organizations to work with each other and with government to deliver conservation benefits that go far beyond what government acting alone could provide.

In July 1991 I named leaders of business, environmental, recreational, educational, and philanthropic organizations to serve as members of the President's Commission on Environmental Quality (PCEQ). I have challenged this Commission to develop and implement an action agenda to improve the environment through voluntary private sector activities that meet the test of economic efficiency.

I also established a Presidential medal for environment and conservation achievement and had the honor of presenting medals to an outstanding group of Americans last October. This program rewards private initiative in service to the environment in a manner equivalent to long-standing Presidential recognition of excellence in the arts, humanities, sciences, and world affairs.

We have encouraged additional private sector initiatives through such groundbreaking efforts as the "Green Lights" energy efficiency project, the "33-50" toxic emission reduction program, the U.S. Advanced Battery Consortium to support development of electric vehicles, and land management partnerships between conservation groups and the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, and the Interior.

Freedom's Full Meaning

As more people around the world join the democratic family and reach for their God-given rights and aspirations, we Americans who have led the way for over 200 years will continue to bear a responsibility to give freedom its full meaning, including freedom from want and freedom from an unsafe environment.

The Cold War was a stark test of the global community's faith in these ideals. We passed that test.

The deadlock in negotiations for improved international trade rules is another challenge to the principles that have drawn the world closer together in the last half century. We must not fail that test.

These struggles for national security and economic growth are now joined by envi-

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ronmental concerns such as deforestation and potential climate change, which also have profound long-term implications. The year ahead will test our ability to redefine the relationship between humanity and the environment—and in so doing, to secure a

greater peace and prosperity for generations to come. We must not fail that test.

GEORGE BUSH

The White House,
March 24, 1992.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Open Skies Treaty *March 24, 1992*

Today the United States, along with Canada and 22 European nations, signed the Treaty on Open Skies in Helsinki, Finland.

In May of 1989, at a time when the immense changes seen in Europe over the past 3 years were just beginning, President Bush proposed that the nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the former Warsaw Pact agree to open their territories to frequent overflights by observation aircraft from the other side. The United States believes that the greater transparency in military activities brought about by such an agreement will help reduce the chances of military confrontation and build confidence in the peaceful intentions of the participating States.

The Open Skies Treaty is the most wide-ranging international confidence-building regime ever developed, covering the entire territory of North America and nearly all

of Europe and the former Soviet Union. Its arrangements for observation flights using photographic, radar, and infrared sensors and its provisions for sharing among participants the information gathered are innovative means to help promote openness and stability in Europe in these uncertain times. Open Skies could also serve as a basis for similar arrangements in other regions of the world where there is a need to build confidence.

The treaty establishes an Open Skies Consultative Commission. In early April it will convene in Vienna, Austria, to complete work on outstanding technical and cost issues regarding treaty implementation. The treaty will be submitted to the United States Senate for its advice and consent to ratification once this work is finished to the satisfaction of all participants.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on Diplomatic Relations With the Republic of Georgia

March 24, 1992

The President has decided that the United States will take immediate steps to establish diplomatic relations with Georgia. The United States had recognized Georgian independence on December 25, 1991. In recent weeks, the new Georgian Government has taken steps to restore civilian rule, begin a dialog on national reconciliation, and committed itself to holding parliamentary elections this year. On the basis of these actions and following communications

between the leader of the Georgian State Council, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Secretary of State James Baker on the political, economic, and security principles of most importance to the United States, the President believes that U.S. interests will be best served by having diplomatic ties with the Georgian Government. The depth, extent, and richness of U.S. relations with Georgia will depend on the Georgian Government's commitment to these principles.